

FRANKLIN COUNTY

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Council Priorities

1. Franklin County needs more financial stability in economic development for the citizens of Franklin County.

In Franklin County there is a major decrease in jobs and a high un-employment rate due to low economic development.

2. Drug, alcohol, tobacco, and truancy prevention/intervention among youth are high in Franklin County. Need to increase the prevention education among youth.

Provide funding for drug court for teens and truancy officer. Also, provide prevention/intervention on drug, alcohol, tobacco, and truancy in the schools and community.

3. Early childhood education/intervention.

Provide funding for Pre-K and early childhood education/intervention programs throughout the county.

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county

Early Care Education

Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Children in Franklin County ages birth to five need access to early intervention programs including screening for such program identifying each child's level of development relating to emotional, social, physical, and cognitive growth

Action Steps

- 1) Identify area referral agencies and service providers.
- 2) Conduct awareness campaigns relating to early intervention for parents, teachers, and caregivers both English and Spanish.
- 3) Promote participation in early awareness interventions both by parents, teachers, care-givers, and providers.
- 4) Seek funding sources if needed to supplement programs in place.

Children in Franklin County need easy access to quality early literacy programs so they will develop needed and appropriate skills for school readiness resulting in children ready to learn when they begin school

Action Steps

- 1) Provide local centers with information about the importance of quality literacy programs through local training opportunities that exist through the Northwest-Shoals Child Development Program DHR Quality Grant program now serving Franklin County providers.
- 2) Educate parents about the importance of quality literacy programs through local parent education programs existing through (Franklin Co. Parenting grant).
- 3) Franklin County providers will continue to participate in the free book mail-out offered through the Northwest-Shoals Community College DHR Quality Grant which provider's quality children's literature to Franklin County families and day-care providers.

Economic Security

Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Education for job skills for young adults with emphasis on responsibility and accountability

Action Steps

- 1) Assess current curriculum in local job training sites, Re: schools, technical schools, career centers, and adult education programs.

- 2) Collaborate with job training and education sites to enhance or implement needed curriculum that will include emphasis on responsibility and accountability for improved work ethics.
- 3) Seek more consistency in truancy rules by bringing awareness to school instructor and admission of statistics for industry absenteeism and tardiness and other problems identified that hinder production.

Enhance and strengthen the county's existing Family Service Center

Action Steps

- 1) Build on the current network of community service providers to increase information and referral distribution through a resource directory and community awareness meetings.
- 2) Seek funding for operating expenses, advertising/billboard, job fairs, career day, resource directory, and mentoring programs.

Migration of young educated and training workforce

Action Steps

- 1) Need to help promote Franklin County for new industries to come and offer jobs to the local citizens.
- 2) Network to communicate the awareness of migration of those educated locally but are leaving the area for employment. Through collaboration with appropriate entities, strategically plan and implement programs that would encourage young adults to have the desire to seek employment locally.

Education

Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Increase after school enrichment programs for all Franklin County and Russellville City Schools

Action Steps

- 1) Seek increase funding for after school programs either through grants or local Senators or representatives.
- 2) Increase test scores through the after school programs.
- 3) Increase learning activities with high technology skills.

Early intervention in school readiness programs

Action Steps

- 1) Seek funding for optional reading enrichment programs in the Franklin County School System.
- 2) Seek adequate funding for pre-school programs specifically Pre-Kindergarten for 4-year olds.

Increase remediation for high school graduation students

Action Steps

- 1) Seek funding for remediation for high school students to help pass the high school graduation.
- 2) Seek funding for counseling and tutoring to students who take the high school graduation exam.

Health

Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

Many children lack access to health care: this includes medical, dental, vision, and mental health care, as well as substance abuse treatment

Action Steps

- 1) Identify children who need health insurance by working with schools, medical facilities and other agencies through referrals, surveying, and access to exiting data bases.
- 2) Assist families in the process of applying for medical insurance and other family support services by helping to complete applications.
- 3) Make ALL KIDS, medical, Child Caring Foundation forms available in language appropriate versions at a variety of public locations.

The need for preventive health care awareness

Action Steps

- 1) Target 3 or more preventable health conditions.
- 2) Disseminate information about the prevention of these identified health conditions to the public through the media, medical facilities, schools and other support agencies.
- 3) Initiate a parenting support group in schools, hospitals, health department, and other community agencies for child health and well being issues.

The need for funding for a school nurses for every Franklin County School System Schools and the Russellville City School System

Action Steps

- 1) Apply for federal and state grants.
- 2) Also lobby our Representatives and Senators for funding.

Parent Involvement Skills

Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Increase parent education and involvement in the schools and community

Action Steps

- 1) Sentence or refer parents to the Parenting Project training.
- 2) Seek funding for parent resource center.
- 3) Form a parent resource directory.
- 4) Increase parenting classes on substance and other prevention programs.
- 5) Educate parents about the importance of quality literacy program through the local parent education program.

Initiate a parenting support group in schools, hospitals, health department, and other community agencies for pregnant and parenting teens

Action Steps

- 1) Promote education and support groups for pregnant teens in the schools and community.
- 2) Seek funding for personnel and supplies to teach abstinences programs in the schools and community.

Safety

Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

High drug and alcohol abuse among teens

Action Steps

- 1) Seek funding and gain support for a drug court for the teens of Franklin County.
- 2) Seek funding and gain support from schools and community agencies to initiate random drug testing and referral services required for mandatory outpatient services.
- 3) Seek funding to teach prevention classes in the classrooms.

Sexual abuse/abuse and neglect prevention

Action Steps

- 1) Education in the schools and community agencies will be geared both toward the youth and the professional staff.
- 2) Increase social worker/counseling services for schools and non-traditional settings.
- 3) Initiate a parenting support groups in schools, hospitals, health department, and other community agencies for pregnant and parenting teens.

Crisis management for high risk youth

Action Steps

- 1) Pass laws and enforce the possession of guns on school property and activities as a criminal act.
- 2) Enforce a uniform attendance policy for all county students.
- 3) Establish a transition program for children returning to the community after an extended absence from structural programs.
- 4) Seek funding for a crisis team for youth.

Policy Recommendations

- Provide adequate funding for health material resources.
- Provide adequate funding for additional personnel, such as school nurses and prevention specialist.
- Provide adequate funding for early child intervention programs and to teach these programs.
- Adequate funding for alcohol, tobacco and drug prevention programs in the school system. Also, seek funding for drug testing in the school system and teen drug court.
- Adequate funding for social workers/counselors services to be in school settings.
- Support legislature for increase in funding for parenting classes.
- Adequate funding for job training.
- Adequate funding for additional personnel, professional development and technology.
- Adequate funding for Pre-School programs specifically Pre-Kindergarten for 4-year olds.

Accomplishments

- Secured an Alcohol Reduction Grant for \$456,000 to combat the problem of underage drinking.
- Hired four prevention specialists and two counselors to work with the County and City Schools with Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco prevention.
- Started an anti-smoking campaign for Franklin County targeting Red Bay and Russellville areas.
- Children's Health and Wellness fairs in Russellville and Red Bay areas with over 15 vendors attending.
- Town Hall Meeting on the issue of underage drinking.
- After school centers in all schools.
- Summer academic and fun programs at four schools in the county including Camp Catch-Up for students who failed the year before.
- Early Warning Attendance Programs for all schools.
- Reading Initiatives programs with scientifically researched based programs in all schools.
- Peer Mentoring Programs initiated in all the schools.
- Personnel training in Reconnecting Youth Mentoring Programs, Toward No Drug Use, Life Skills, and Class Action.
- Prevention staff attended National Prevention Meeting on Underage Drinking.
- Prevention programs taught at all schools and the C.I.T.Y. program.
- Prevention advisory council meetings held.
- Parenting grant for All Learning Starts At Home
- Imagination Library started for preschool literacy.
- Pre-Kindergarten camp held in Red Bay.
- Learn and Serve grant for Red Bay School to perform community service.
- Prevention in-service for teachers on drug abuse.
- United community efforts started to address prevention.